

Headlines:

USCG – DE and QA submissions;
USCG – NMC seeks deck officers;
Court – MSC vessel and oil spill liability;
Court – asbestos and bare-metal products;
SOMS – survey of shallower waters; and
MV Prinsendam fire and sinking – 4 October 1980.

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Bryant's Maritime News

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USCG – DE and QA submissions



The USCG National Maritime Center (NMC) issued a **bulletin** reminding mariners that Designated Examiner (DE) or Qualified Assessor (QA) requests and Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) applications are separate issues. The DE/QA requests should not be included with MMC applications as it delays processing. (10/3/17)

[http://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/announcements/2017/de_qa_submissions_notice.pdf].

USCG – NMC seeks deck officers



The USCG National Maritime Center (NMC) issued a **bulletin** stating that it seeks applications from qualified deck officers to assist with the evaluation and approval of training courses and programs, qualified assessors, designated

examiners, and instructors. Applications must be received by 4 April 2018.
(10/3/17)
[http://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/announcements/2017/de_qa_submissions_notice.pdf].

Court – MSC vessel and oil spill liability



The US Court of Appeals for the First Circuit ruled that a ship owned by the Military Sealift Command and operated by a private contractor is a public vessel and thus exempt from liability under the Oil Pollution Act (OPA). But, the court ruled that the government is subject to suit under the Suits in Admiralty Act for damages arising from an oil spill emanating from the vessel. **Ironshore Specialty Insurance v. United States**, No. 16-1589 (1st Cir., September 15, 2017) [<http://media.ca1.uscourts.gov/pdf/opinions/16-1589P-01A.pdf>]. *Note: This item was brought to my attention by my good friend Bryant Gardner of Winston & Strawn.*

Court – asbestos and bare-metal products



The US Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit ruled that maritime law permits a manufacturer of even a bare-metal product to be held liable for asbestos-related injuries when the circumstances indicate the injury was a reasonably foreseeable result of the manufacturer's actions, at least in the context of a maritime negligence claim and in view of the maritime law's special solicitude for the safety and protection of sailors. **In re Asbestos Products Liability Litigation**, No. 16-2602 (3rd Cir., October 3, 2017) [<http://www2.ca3.uscourts.gov/opinarch/162602p.pdf>].

SOMS – survey of shallower waters



The Singapore Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) issued a **news release** stating that Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Malacca Strait Council of Japan signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for Phase Two of the Joint Hydrographic Survey of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS). This will further the work of Phase One by surveying the areas of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) that are shallower than 30m. (10/3/17) [<http://www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/media-centre/news-releases/detail/3c0aa947-49f1-4c2e-8390-a1b124ec8648>].

MS Prinsendam fire and sinking – 4 October 1980



The cruise ship *Prinsendam* was built in 1973 for Holland America Line. It was somewhat smaller than average size for its day, carrying about 350 passengers and 200 crew. Just after midnight on 4 October 1980, a fire broke out in the engine room as the ship was transiting the Gulf of Alaska. Shortly thereafter, the master sent a message to the US Coast Guard requesting assistance. The ship was then 120 miles south of Cape Spencer and outside the range of USCG helicopters. The Coast Guard advised the master to send out an SOS, but he refused. The chief radio officer sent one anyway. Ships in the area responded, including the tanker *Williamsburg*, the USCGC *Woodrush*, and the USCGC *Boutwell*, which served as the on-scene coordinator. The master gave the order to abandon ship at sunrise. The Coast Guard, Air Force, and Canadian Forces dispatched long-range helicopters, which carried persons from the lifeboats to the *Williamsburg*. The *Prinsendam* was taken under tow, but the fire could not be extinguished and the ship was listing heavily in deteriorating weather. Permission to bring the ship into sheltered waters was denied by the Coast Guard, but probably had no impact, as the ship sank shortly thereafter. *Woodrush* located the last of the lifeboats and transferred the survivors to *Boutwell*. The tanker *Williamsburg* brought 359 passengers and crew safely to Valdez. There were no fatalities and no serious injuries.

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